



**February 10, 2020**

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## Employee Recognition:

### *Chad Stover – Congratulations!*

- ◆ Congratulations to Chad Stover (regional fire specialist) for completing the requirements for his Bachelors of Science degree in Leadership and Organizational Management from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg. Chad took the initiative to enroll in and complete this degree program in an area that would further assist him his emergency response leadership responsibilities, both in his role with the VDOF and his involvement with his local volunteer fire department. He recognized the important role that professional development plays in advancing one’s career, which took quite a lot of hard work and dedication. Chad should be extremely proud of this accomplishment and we would like to congratulate him on this achievement!

## Training Opportunities:

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The following are two online courses offered on the NWCG training site which might be of some interest as we head into the spring fire season.

### *Firefighter Math*

- ◆ This online course provides knowledge of basic math concepts and tools necessary for making math calculations in the field. Topics include calculating tank volumes and flow rates, determining pump pressure and friction loss, understanding maps and location coordinates and estimating slope. Additionally, the course presents information on calculating flame length, flame height, midflame windspeed and other variables related to wildland firefighting efforts.
- Link - [Firefighter Math](#)

### *Investigation of Railroad Caused Fires*

- ◆ This online course provides information about the specific causes of railroad related wildfires. Detailed sections will provide specialized information and techniques to aid in the investigation of railroad related wildfires.
- Link - [Investigating Railroad](#)

## Coming Up:

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### *Build a Better Meal Campaign – February 12, 10:30am - Fire Conference Room*

- ◆ Enjoying a healthy meal begins long before you sit down to eat. Your stage of life, culture, traditions, preferences, and access to food all affect the choices you make. The build A Better Meal program will provide guiding principles to help you plan, shop and prepare meals that fuel your body with the nutrients necessary to be your best. We'll discuss updated food labels, portions, how to outsmart the grocery store and more to help you build a better meal, one choice at a time.

### *Ready for Spring Fire Season – February 15 – April 30*

- ◆ February 15 marks the start of Virginia's spring wildfire season. Everyone is reminded to make preparations now to ensure the readiness of yourself and your equipment for the upcoming season. Additionally, the FiResponse application is fully operational and is our primary tool in support of dispatch operations. Anyone with questions in regards to agency readiness expectations or the use of the FiResponse program should consult with your immediate supervisor.

### *National FFA Week – February 22-29*

## Project Updates:

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### *Urban Wood Project*

- ◆ Recently Adam Downing (Virginia Cooperative Extension) and Joe Lehnert (forest utilization and marketing specialist) traveled to Keedysville, Maryland to help with the final edits for the new Woodland Care Practices Manual, a small, field-ready guidebook designed for service providers who manage natural resources on smaller properties. The manual will include sections on woodland management, wildlife management, invasive species control and pesticide use. The book will be printed in the near future and should be available for distribution in late 2020. The manual is a joint project of Virginia Cooperative Extension, University of Maryland Extension, Penn State Extension, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the VDOF.

## Last Week

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### State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell participated in an initial conference call with the American Forest Foundation (AFF) Woodland Operating Committee. This group provides guidance to AFF on programs related to forest landowners including the American Tree Farm System. Farrell will be representing the National Association of State Foresters, replacing Jim Karels who is retiring as Florida State Forester this month.

### Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban and community forestry (U&CF) program manager) and Molly O'Liddy (U&CF program partnership coordinator) worked with Janet Muncy (integrated media manager) to finalize a 'U&CF Forestry Topic' sheet highlighting available grant program and past/future projects. The one-pager is available via the VDOF website.
- ◆ Charlie Becker (utilization and marketing manager) sent final drafts of the Industry Roundtable report to members of the Board of Forestry and roundtable participants for review and feedback. All edits and addendums should be received by February 14 and a final report should be available for distribution the last week in February.
- ◆ Charlie Becker attended the Appalachian Society of American Foresters in Norfolk Virginia, January 29 – 31. In addition to attending all of the business and technical sessions, Charlie met with Barry New (North Carolina Forest Service) to discuss joint grant projects and deliverables. Charlie also met with other attendees about possible opportunities related to our Industry Roundtable/wood Innovation projects.
- ◆ Charlie Becker met with Caitlin Clark (VDACS international marketing specialist) to follow up on the reverse trade mission results and provide updated resource information for a marketing piece for the Dubai Wood Trade Show.
- ◆ Joe Lehnen (utilization and marketing specialist) met with Daniel Klein of the Richmond Green City Commission to develop an urban wood plan for the city.
- ◆ Joe Lehnen met with University of Virginia staff to discuss the formal establishment of an urban wood program for the university.

### Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Forest Inventory and Analysis crews have completed data collection and editing of nearly 25 percent of the current panel of inventory plots, as of February 1.
- ◆ The 28th annual Virginia Association of Forest Health Professionals conference took place in Glen Allen on January 27 and 28. There were 190 attendees including over 40 VDOF staff. Presentations were given on topics ranging from invasive plant control, emerging pests such as the spotted lanternfly and imported fire ant, established pests such as the emerald ash borer, urban soil health, climate change, longleaf pine and the economics of invasive species. Thank you to everyone who participated!
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health manager) Katlin Mooneyham (forest health specialist) and Lara Johnson met Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service (VDACS) and USDA-Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) staff in Winchester, Virginia to plan and finalize details for the urban forestry strike team deployment February 10-14.
- ◆ Kaltin Mooneyham conducted the final tree of heaven survey in Frederick and Clarke counties. Tree of heaven is a preferred host of the spotted lanternfly and our aerial surveys have been successful in

mapping tree of heaven in the areas infested with spotted lanternfly. The data will help guide treatment and hopefully slow the spread of the spotted lanternfly.

### **Fire and Emergency Response:**

- ◆ John Miller (director fire and emergency response) attended the Virginia Incident Management Team (IMT) logistics workshop in Chesapeake on January 28. The workshop was designed to pull together representatives from Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), Virginia State Police (VSP), VDOF and several smaller, regionally located IMTs across the state in effort to increase the level of collaboration amongst IMT personnel in the Commonwealth. The group generally recognizes the VDOF as the most experienced and developed IMT resource in the Commonwealth, although significant efforts are now underway by VDEM to both develop their own agency IMT resources, as well as to take the lead on IMT training, development and coordination here in the Commonwealth.
- ◆ Steve Counts (emergency operations program manager) attended the national state agency fire chiefs, fire supervisors and fire managers meeting in Orlando, Florida on January 28-30. This group, which is collectively known as the CMS group, meets every two years to tackle specific predefined work goals for the meeting, utilizing breakout groups and facilitated discussions of the leading topics affecting state level wildfire management throughout the nation.

### **Agency Lands**

- ◆ The Arbor Day Foundation has approached VDOF on behalf of an anonymous donor who would like to help with reforestation efforts in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. They will be purchasing all the VDOF nursery pine seedlings needed for the planting projects in Mecklenburg County this season, up to a total cost of \$140,000. This will cover the seedling costs for almost 3,000 acres of loblolly pine and over 100 additional acres of shortleaf pine reforestation.
- ◆ Garland Gray Forestry Center (GGFC) has packed a total of 8.9 million loblolly pine seedlings to date.
- ◆ Monica Davis (Augusta Forestry Center (AFC) program support technician) and Renee Kershner (AFC P14) have been busy processing seedling orders and, as of January 31, they have processed 550 orders for this year's sales totaling 3.4 million seedlings. At this time last year, AFC had received 524 orders. Seedling grading has begun with 206,785 graded to date.
- ◆ Brian Van Eerden with The Nature Conservancy, met with GGFC staff to discuss planting native grass species that compliment longleaf pine ecosystems. This spring, the nursery will conduct a containerized trial seeding of 5 species that will be used to compare containerized grass planting versus seed sowing.
- ◆ Jerre Creighton (research program manager), with assistance from Ben Duke (state forest technician) operating a skid-steer, removed volunteer pines from all of the most problematic plots (i.e. those thinned to 100 tpa) on the RW19 study. The work was performed to make sure the only effects on the study trees are stand density and fertilization.

### **Central Region**

- ◆ Jordan Herring (senior area forester) and Kinner Ingram (urban and community forester) assisted the Fairfax Park Authority with a prescribed burn of native warm season grasses at Ellick Woodlands Natural Area Preserve in Fairfax. The goal of this grassland is to provide habitat for declining grassland bird species such as eastern meadowlarks and grasshopper sparrows.

### **Public Information**

- ◆ Virginia Project Learning Tree (PLT), led by State PLT Coordinator Page Hutchinson, has accepted an invitation by the National PLT program to host the 2021 International Project Learning Tree

Conference. This is a nod to our outstanding program in Virginia and will draw upon PLT facilitators from around the Commonwealth.

### *News Clips*

- ◆ [Virginia's 4 p.m. burn law starts Feb. 15](#)
- ◆ [Wildfire singes about 23 acres of national forest land in Botetourt Co.](#)